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Structural Features of Marten Habitat



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We wish to thank Sarah Harvey, University of Miami, Ohio, for her leadership in the preparation of this brochure, and to Gabriela Sincich for allowing us to use her marten illustrations.



United States Department of Agriculture
North Central Research Station
Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest



Great Lakes Indian Fish and Wildlife Commission

Marten Habitat Features

Stand Characteristics:

- Mature Forests
- Structural Complexity
- Closed Canopy



Gabriel Smorch

Site-Specific Characteristics:

- Trees with Holes
 - Maternal den trees
 - Spring/summer rest trees
- Coniferous Understory
- Coniferous Canopy Component
- Fine Woody Debris
 - Branches
 - Small logs
- Large Woody Debris
 - Logs
 - Stumps
 - Root tip-up mounds



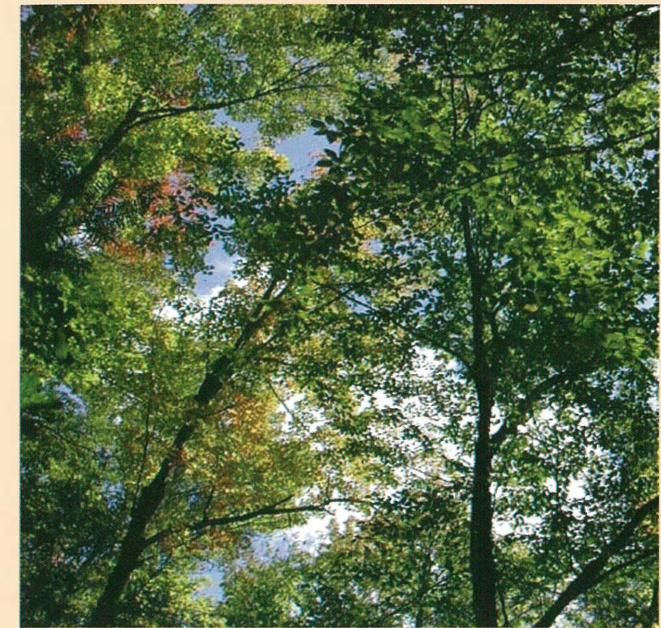
Mature Forests

Late successional stands provide more of the features that are important to martens such as closed canopy, large trees, and woody debris than do younger stands.



Structural Complexity

Sites that provide multiple canopy layers; tall live trees; and large volumes of logs, stumps, and branches are used by martens for rest sites, maternal dens, and foraging sites.



Closed Canopy

Martens prefer a predominately closed canopy forest which helps them avoid avian predators.



Trees with Holes

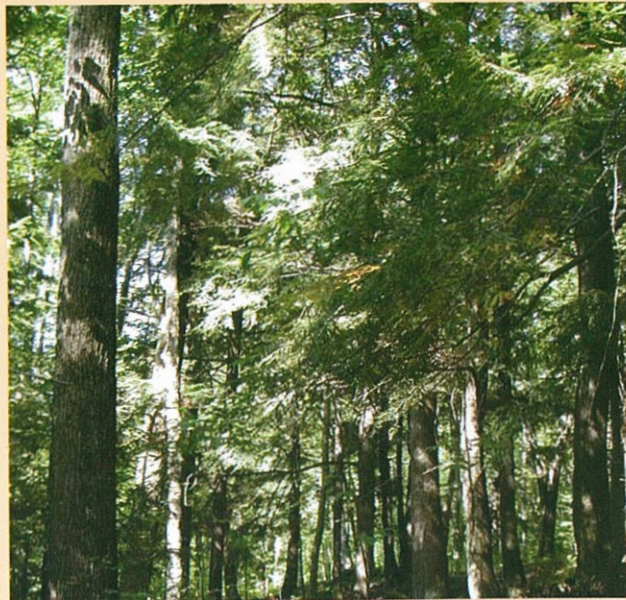
Live trees with a diameter at breast height (d.b.h.) of more than 22 inches that contain holes approximately 3 inches in diameter are used by marten both as maternal den sites and as spring and summer rest sites.

Yellow birch, white cedar, and sugar maple are often used for these cavity trees which provide protection from predators.



Coniferous Understory

Conifers provide additional cover in the winter. The low branches of understory conifers may provide breaks in the snow cover for martens to access prey and rest sites beneath the snow.



Coniferous Canopy Component

Pockets of conifers, particularly hemlocks, within a hardwood stand are frequently used by martens for maternal den sites and for winter resting sites.



Fine Woody Debris

Smaller branches found on the forest floor provide lofts in the snow for martens to more easily access prey and rest sites.



Large Woody Debris

Large woody debris such as stumps and logs provide warm winter rest sites.